

The Clever Doctor

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BY

REA WOODMAN, M. A.

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ELDRIDGE ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE,
FRANKLIN, - OHIO.

The Clever Doctor.

Adapted From Grimm's Tale,
"THE CLEVER DOCTOR."

A Dramatic Satire in Five Acts.

By REA WOODMAN

Author of "The Sweet Girl Graduates," "The Rescue of
Prince Hal" and "Galliger."

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1912



THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY.

Jacob Crabs, "Doctor Know-All, an Ambitious Peasant.

Grethel Crabs, His Wife.

Lord Noddlehede, a Wealthy Nobleman.

Lord Wigglestaff, Friend to Lord Noddlehede.

Dr. P. S. Sodium, a Prominent Physician.

Peters, Servant to Lord Noddlehede.

Patients, Servants and Waiting Maids.

ACT I—*The Diningroom of Dr. Sodium's House.*

“Anybody can learn to be a doctor. Get a gig and pill box.”

ACT II—*The Library of Lord Noddlehede's Palace, Five Weeks Later.*

“Never put off until tomorrow what you ought to have done yesterday. Put ‘Doc’ on the trail.”

ACT III—*The Office of Dr. Knowall, the Same Morning.*

“Grethel, old girl, our fortune is made.”

ACT IV—*The Diningroom of Lord Noddlehede's the Next Day.*

“From this day, Doctor Know-All rides in his own carriage.”

ACT V—*The Office of Doctor Knowall, Six Months Later.*

“There's only one prescription for rich, nervous women. I always give 'em that one.”

ACT I.

(The Dining-room of the House of Dr. Sodium. The Doctor is seated at dinner, served by a brisk white-capped maid servant.)

Sodium. *(eating)*. Any mail?

Maid. Yes, sir.

Sodium. *(eating)*. Bring it to me. Any telegrams?

Maid. No, sir. Yes, sir. *(She goes out. The Doctor eats away, in a business-like manner, until she returns, carrying an enormous amount of mail.)*

Sodium. *(opening letters as he continues his dinner)*. That will do. *(The Maid goes. He opens letters galore, frowning with professional pre-occupation while he skims their contents.)*

(Enter the Maid.)

Maid. The wood man wants to see you.

Sodium. Eh?

Maid. The man who brought the wood, you know.

Sodium. *(looking at her as if she were n't there at all)*. Well, what else?

Maid. *(distinctly, with virtuous patience)*. You bought a load of wood this morning. From a peasant. He has just unloaded it in the back yard. He wants his pay.

Sodium. *(eating)*. Of course. Naturally. Send him in. *(The Maid goes.)*

(Enter Jacob Crabs, in peasant clothes, and with a long knitted scarf wound many times around his throat.)

Crabs. *(sheepishly, mauling off his cap)*. I brought yer that wood.

Sodium. *(looking up)*. Eh? Oh, is it you? How much is the wood, my good man?

Crabs. Two dollars was what we agreed on.

Sodium. (*producing his money purse*). So we did. You are right. And cheap enough it was. (*counts out some silver pieces*). I am much obliged to you. It's a cold day. Have you far to go? (*The Maid brings in a small covered dish, and removes the Doctor's plate.*)

Crabs. (*who has been taking in the appointments of the room, and of the table*). About nine miles. It's a hard life, is farmin'. I get mighty tired. (*Sodium does not answer.*) I never set down to no sich meal as that in my life.

Sodium. I earned this dinner. I work twelve hours a day. Do you?

Crabs. (*wistfully*). No, but I could if I knowed how. I work all I know.

Sodium. (*lightly, eating*). Well, that's all any man can do.

Crabs. I work all I know, but we don't eat off no chiney plates at my house; we don't have no puddin' of a week day. I wish I was a doctor.

Sodium. It's a hard life. Wish for something easy. (*scans a letter or two.*)

Crabs. (*his roving, wistful gaze returning to the doctor after a slow survey of the room*). Could I learn to be a doctor?

Sodium. (*folding up his napkin*). Oh, anybody can learn to be a doctor. Get a gig and a pill box.

Crabs. I got a horse and wagon.

Sodium. (*plainly bored, and sorting his letters*). Then you're all fixed. Paint a sign and commence.

Crabs. (*shaking his shocky head*). Don't I have to study no doctor books?

Sodium. (*sizing him up from head to heels, and back again, with curious deliberation*). So you want to be a doctor? Well, there's no accounting for tastes. You can be a doctor—a doctor of a sort.

Crabs. What must I do?

Sodium. Unwind that flag—or whatever it is—and sit

down there. (*He points to a chair. Crabs unwinds the endless scarf, and sits down*). Now, listen. You want to be a doctor. To accomplish this, you must do three things. First, buy a large book—a big, big book, and always keep it open on the table. Second, turn your horse and wagon into money, and with it buy clothes and other things suitable for a doctor. Third, have a sign painted, “I am Doctor Knowall,” and nail it over your door.

Crabs. (*twisting his feet around*). What sort of doctor things do you mean?

Sodium. You’ve been in a doctor’s office, haven’t you?

Crabs. Once—when I had a carbuncle on my neck.

Sodium. Well, buy things such as that Doctor had. Always wear good clothes, and always be in a hurry. Smile twice a year—on legal holidays—and mind your own business. That’s all. (*He turns his attention wholly to his letters.*)

Crabs. (*rising, after a minute*). I guess I can do that; I allus have. (*Sodium does not answer. Crabs winds the endless scarf about his neck, and prepares to go.*) Well, good day to you.

Sodium. (*glancing up*). Good day. Good luck to you. (*Crabs goes, with a long, wistful look at the absorbed doctor.*)

Sodium. (*solus*). There, I suppose I’ve made another quack. Well, there are fools enough to keep us all busy. If he’s clever at the start, he’ll succeed. (*He rises, drinks a glass of water, and gathers up his mail.*) It’s not how much a doctor knows, but what sort of people he treats. If he treats money, he makes money. If that fellow gets on the right track, he’s good for a long run. He’s a climber.

(*He goes out, carrying his letters. The Maid comes and clears off the table, with many unconscious coquetries.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

*(The Library of Lord Noddlehede's Palace,
Five Weeks Later.)*

(In his elegant Library, Lord Noddlehede is discovered pacing back and forth, like a man distraught. There is a gentle tap at the door.)

Nod. Come in.

(Enter Peters, in livery.)

Peters. A gentleman to see you, my lord.

Nod. I can't see him. You know I'm in no condition to see anybody.

Peters.—Yes, my lord. Thank you, my lord. *(He goes, meekly. Noddlehede continues his agitated pacing of the floor.)*

(Re-enter Peters.)

Peters. My lord, here is—

Nod. *(curtly)*. Is it the Chief of Police?

Peters. No, my lord. It is—

Nod. *(crossly)*. I told you I could n't see anybody. How many times do you have to be told?

Peters. *(meekly, handing a letter)*. A message from Lord Wigglestaff.

Nod. Oh. Why did n't you say so? *(He opens the letter and reads aloud.)* "Have just heard of the robbery. It's hard lines. If I can do anything, let me know. Yours, Wigglestaff." Is Lord Wigglestaff here?

Peters. Yes, my lord. He is waiting, my lord.

Nod. *(tossing the letter aside)*. Bring him up. *(After Peters has gone, he takes a few turns, "sighing like a furnace," then seats himself.)*

(Enter Lord Wigglestaff, "a jolly good fellow," with hat, huge-headed cane, and yellow gloves.)

Wig. Mornin', Noddlehede. I'm mighty sorry, old man. Better luck next time.

Nod. (*extending his correct hand*). Good morning, my lord. Thank you. Be seated.

Wig. (*flopping down carelessly*). Can't stay. Only called to inquire.

Nod. (*reseating his dignified self*). You have heard of the robbery, you say?

Wig. (*peeling off his gloves*). Just read an account of it. Came right over. Paper said ten thousand. Hope it was n't so much.

Nod. (*burying his face in his hands*). Ten thousand dollars.

Wig. By George! Gold?

Nod. Gold.

Wig. You don't say! Think the servants took it?

Nod. (*shaking his melancholy head*). No. There is not a servant in the palace that would rob me of a dollar.

Wig. (*flecking his boot with his cane*). Glad you think so. Blessed be faith.

Nod. (*with apprehension*). What do you mean, my lord? Do you think my own servants would steal money from me—from me?

Wig. I don't think. Makes my head ache. When was it taken?

Nod. I do not know. I discovered the loss yesterday.

Wig. What you going to do?

Nod. Do, my lord?

Wig. Do. There's always something to *do*. Brace up, my friend. All's not lost that's out of sight.

Nod. I have asked the Chief of Police to take charge of the matter.

Wig. Police nothin'. I tell you what. Send for "Doc." Knowall. He'll find it while the police are loading their pistols.

(*Enter Peters.*)

Nod. Well?

Peters. The Chief of Police, my lord.

Nod. Ask him to wait.

Wig. Don't mind me, Noddlehede. Let him come up. I'm rather fond of the police—when they're after the other fellow!

Nod. We will see him presently. (*To Peters.*) Tell him to wait. (*Peters goes, bowing meekly.*) Who is this doctor, my lord?

Wig. Nobody knows, exactly, but he's the cleverest man in this town. Send for him. Never put off until tomorrow what you ought to have done yesterday. Put "Doc" on the trail.

Nod. Is he a gentleman?

Wig. (*snickering*). Well, hardly. His father never heard the word, or I'm another. He was a poor peasant named Crabs, they say, but Dr. Sodium educated him and started him out. Now he's "Doctor Knowall," and has a shack of his own down on High Street. The things that fellow knows would astonish you.

Nod. (*playing elegantly with the paper knife*). About medicine, my lord?

Wig. (*rising and moving about the room, in an excess of enthusiasm*). About everything. He's a sort of mind reader, and knows things without being told, and before they happen. Why, he told Harry Hardryder exactly where to find his lost watch.

Nod. He did? You don't tell me!

Wig. (*jamming his hat on his head to get rid of it, putting his hands in his pockets, and stramming around*). Hardryder broke his leg. Called in Knowall to fix him up. Knowall gets another doctor to set it, and gives him some powders, and tells him to take one every hour. "Can't, Doc," says Hardryder, "lost my watch." "Lost your watch?" says Doc. "Is that so?" "Yep," says Hardryder, "can't find it high nor low." Says Doc, "Did you look on the sideboard?" "Of course," says Hardryder, "looked everywhere." Doc thinks a minute. "Well then," says he, "look in the wine cellar." And sure enough, there it was. Been lost for five weeks. Hard-

ryder had had to swear off, you know, on account of his stomach, but of course Doc did n't know that.

Nod. (*leaning forward, interested*). Wonderful, my lord!

Wig. (*warming to the theme*). Oh, he's a keen one. Told Betty Mason where her son was. He cured her of rheumatism, and she said she could n't pay because her son was lost, and had n't brought home any money. "Where is your son?" says Doc,—I suppose he thought she was lyin'. "Heving only knows," says Betty, "he have n't been home these six months." "Look in Lockport jail," says Doc, quick as a wink. And there they found him; been sent up for horse stealing.

Nod. How much does this man charge for his services?

Wig. He did n't charge Hardryder anything, and all he charged Betty Mason for was the pills. One dollar. Why don't you send for him? He's a ferrit; he'll locate your money. I tell you what; come along with me—I got the carriage here—and I'll drop you at his office.

Nod. But—er what if the police get hold of it?

Wig. (*with an expansive grin*). Oh they won't. The police never get hold of anything. Come along.

Nod. But how can I approach the subject, my lord? He is a doctor. I can not ask a doctor to do police duty. It is unprofessional.

Wig. (*drumming thoughtfully on the table with his cane*). I have it. Invite him to dinner.

Nod. (*horror-stricken*). But he is not a gentleman!

Wig. (*shrugging*). 'Spose he is n't. You have lost ten thousand dollars. You want to find it. You can't go to him; he is n't a gentleman. Don't you see?

Nod. (*helplessly*). Well, what then?

Wig. (*drumming on the table*). You invite him to dinner. You get to talking; from politics to horses; from horses to finance; from finance to gold; from gold to robbery; from robbery to your robbery. It's dead easy. Come along. Doc's a busy man.

Nod. (rising to ring a tiny bell). That is an excellent idea, my lord. I will invite this clever doctor to dinner.

(*Enter Peters.*)

Bring me my coat and hat. (*Peters goes.*)

Wig. (drumming thoughtfully). How do you know your servants are honest?

Nod. (arranging things on his desk). Because they have always been.

Wig. That's no proof they always will be.

(*Enter Peters with cane, hat, overcoat and gloves. He assists Noddlehede to don his coat.*)

Nod. (putting on his coat with infinite pains and elegance). It is no proof, my lord, but it is a good reason. I should as soon think of accusing myself as my servants. (*Peters fumbles, and shows sudden confusion.*) How long have you been in my service, Peters?

Peters. (visibly agitated). Twenty-eight years, my lord.

Nod. (drawing on his gloves, oblivious of Peters' confusion). Born in this palace, were you not?

Peters. (dropping the cane). Yes, my lord. (*In recovering the cane, he drops the hat, which rolls around.*) Pardon me, my lord.

Wig. (drawing on his gloves, watching Peters narrowly). You're nervous this morning, Peters.

Peters. (handing Noddlehede his hat and cane). Yes, my lord.

Wig. (grinning). Better take something for it, Peters.

Peters. (bowing nervously, his eyes downcast). Thank you, my lord. (*to Noddlehede*). Is that all, my lord?

Nod. Yes, Peters. Tell the Chief of Police that I will return in an hour. Meanwhile, he can look over the premises.

Peters. Yes, my lord. Thank you, my lord. (*He goes, stumbling over a buffet.*)

Wig. Fine fellow, that Peters. So self-possessed.

Nod. (*being quite ready, and conscious of his perfection*). All the servants are upset this morning. My lord, I await your pleasure.

Wig. After you, Noddlehede. (*They go out, Noddlehede showing much insistent pantomime deference to his guest.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

(*The Office of Dr. Knowall, the Same Morning.*)

(*In a barren office, with a plain desk, and a few bottles on a shelf, Jacob Crabs, "Dr. Know-all," is keeping "office hours." He is discovered reading a huge book with puzzled earnestness.*)

Crabs. (*reading aloud, and spelling out the big words laboriously*). "The for—for—ma—tion—the formation of t—u—b—e—r—c—l—e—s, tub—er—cles, in any t—i—s—s—u—e, due to the presence of s—p—e—c—i—f—i—c, speck—if—tick, b—a—c—i—l—l—u—s." That gets me. It's the hardest yet. (*spells it again*). B—a, bay, c—i—l—l, sil, baysill, u—s, us, baysillus. Backsill-us. Now "bay" or "back," which is it? Backsillyus. That don't sound good; it don't sound scientific. Baysillus. Baysillus. That's it, I reckon. "Speck-if-tick baysillus." That's what consumption is. (*Reads aloud, quite fluently*): "The formation of tub-ercles in any tissure due to the presence of speck-if-tick baysillus." (*looks up twistfully*). I hope I can remember that until tomorrow. (*sighs*). There are lots of big words in the doctor business. (*drums thoughtfully on the desk*). Lots of big words. Now who'd a-thought consumption was anything like that? "Speck-if-tick baysillus." It

sounds mighty bad. (*looks at an enormous silver watch*). Eleven o'clock. (*yawns profoundly, and bangs the book shut.*) There are 206 bones in the human anatomy. I learned that yesterday. (*yawns and settles himself to sleep*). It makes me sleepy to read.

(*Enter Mrs. Crabs, with a large ragbag, and some mending.*)

Mrs. C. (*dismally*). What are you doing, Jacob?

Crabs. (*starting from his nap, and reaching for the book*). I'm reading up on consumption.

Mrs. C. (*putting the ragbag on the desk, and seating herself*). I thought I'd come in and set awhile. There's nobody out there—there never is.

Crabs. (*crossly*). Don't put that ragbag on the desk. You ought n't to sew in here. It aint professional.

Mrs. C. (*sewing*). You must n't say aint. We got to talk proper now. (*Crabs reads, and she sews, remarking, presently*). What are you readin' about?

Crabs. (*turning a page*). Consumption.

Mrs. C. Why don't you read about something you don't know? Everybody knows about consumption.

Crabs. (*shaking his head*). Not the kind in this book they don't. This is speck-if-tick consumption.

Mrs. C. Oh. (*He returns to his book, with renewed zest. Pretty soon she says*): I think this is a terribul lonesome town. I wish we'd never sold the farm. It seems like you don't get started, somehow. How many patients have you had this week?

Crabs. One. I can't get started all at once. I'll have to cure some rich or famous person before people will think I'm a good doctor.

Mrs. C. Some great person.

Crabs. (*with a gusty sigh*). Yes, a King or a Duke, or something like that.

Mrs. C. But Kings and Dukes don't get sick. They don't have to work and they have plenty to eat. Why should they get sick?

Crabs. (*crossly*). Oh well, I think they might get an indigestion! (*Without, there is a tremendous clatter and banging.*) What's that?

Mrs. C. (*sewing serenely*). It's that sign. It bangs against the house all the time. (*There is a sound of heavy falling.*) There! It's blew down!

Crabs. Well, we got to have that sign. Doctor Sodium said so. (*listening*). Hark! There's somebody in the waiting room. You got to go. (*She rises, scattering spools and ragbag bundles. He lays the book open on the desk, and puts on a pair of eye-glass rims.*) Hurry up!

Mrs. C. (*picking up things, and dropping more*). Oh, I hope it's a Duke! (*Attempting to help her, Crabs bumps heads with her.*) Ouch!—(*whispering*). You aint got on your beard. (*He takes a beard from his pocket, and puts it on, with a rubber band.*)

(*Enter a small, slovenly servant girl, with a large bottle.*)

Crabs. (*stroking his beard into place*). Well, sissy, what do you want?

Servant. (*sniffing*). Air you the doctor?

Crabs. Yes, my child.

Servant. My missis wants some benzine. (*She holds out the bottle.*)

Crabs. This aint an apothecary shop. Who is your missis?

Servant. (*sniffing painfully*). Ole Miz Tippet.

Crabs. Well, she can't buy benzine here.

Mrs. C. Little girl, are you sure missis said benzine?

Servant. Yessum.

Mrs. C. Is your missis sick?

Servant. No mum, but she has queer spells Sattaday nights.

Mrs. C. (*with an air of wisdom*). And this is Friday.—Don't you see, Jacob, she meant morphine, for her sick spell tomorrow night. Give her morphine.

Crabs. Sissy, are you sure she did n't say morphine?

Servant. I dunno. Benzine's what I allus gets in this bottle.

Crabs. (*smelling the bottle*). Smells like vinegar.

Mrs. C. (*smelling the bottle*). Smells like coal oil.

Crabs. (*smelling the bottle*). Smells like gin.—Are you sure this is the right bottle?

Servant. (*wearily*). I dunno.

Crabs. (*smelling the bottle*). In this coagulation of smells, gin certainly preponderates.—Have you got the money to pay for it?

Servant. (*resting on the other foot*). Yessir. I allus pays.

Mrs. C. I'd give her morphine.

Crabs. (*seating himself, and speaking impressively*). Now, sissy, listen. Benzine is what you rub grease out with. Morphine is—is—er—something different. Morphine is very different. (*The sniffing Servant looks at him earnestly.*) Does your missis understand the proprieties of morphine?

Servant. (*earnestly*). Yessir.

Mrs. C. (*consumed with pride in his performance*). Read to her what your doctor book says about morphine.

Crabs. (*opening the book*). Let see if I can make it plainer to you. (*After a prodigious turning of leaves, he reads, to the Servant's awed admiration*). "Morphine. A bitter cry—stall—leen nar—nar—narcotic all—all—kal—lord contained in o—pee—um, and used in medicine for the purpose of all—eve—vi—ating pain and deducing sleep."—There, now you know what morphine is. Is your missis sleepy?

Servant. (*earnestly*). No sir. She's a-washin'.

Crabs. If she aint sleepy she don't want morphine. You cut home and find out what she wants. She'd better write it down. Leave the bottle.

Servant. Yessir. I'll get her to write it down. (*She goes.*)

Crabs. (*smelling the bottle*). Of all the smells I ever smelled—Listen! There's somebody else. Go on away.—Here, take your ragbag.

Mrs. C. Maybe it's a Duke this time! (*She tiptoes out.*)

Crabs. (*opening the book*). Come in!

(*Enter a woman Patient, with a shawl over her head.*)

Good morning, Madam. Be seated, Madam. (*She seats herself, with a groan.*) Where do you hurt most, Madam?

Patient. (*lowering her shawl to her shoulders*). I dunno, doctor, I declare I hurt so everywhere.

Crabs. Ah, that is a bad symbol, Madam, a bad symbol. Probably your solar plexus is affected.

Patient. (*scared*). Oh, Doctor, do you think so? (*Crabs feels her pulse, with impressive use of the silver watch.*) I kaint sleep nights, and I aint got no appy-tite for nothin' but limey beans; seems like nothin' else won't set on my stummick.

Crabs. Please be quiet, Madam. Your heart does not beat so well when you talk. . . . It is as I suspicioned. Your solar plexus is very bad. Your resignation is low, and your diagnosis is weak. We must increase your resignation at once. (*She looks scared. He goes to the medicine shelf, takes down several bottles, and concocts some medicine, pouring it into a small bottle.*) Now, Madam, listen to my instructions carefully.

Patient. (*earnestly, trying not to break down*). Yes, doctor. Say 'em slow.

Crabs. (*shaking the bottle vigorously*). Put a table-spoonful of this in hot water; let it cool, and—and sip it slowly. Then eat three small crackers.

Patient. (*earnestly*). Three small crackers. Yes, doctor.

Crabs. (*wrapping up the medicine*). Take it every two hours. If the pain in the solar plexus returns, repeat the dose as before. Do not sit in a draught, and

whatever you do, do not go to bed hungry. That is the very worst thing you can do for the solar plexus.

Patient. (*quaking*). But, doctor, what is the matter with me?

Crabs. (*replacing his eye-glass rims and straightening his beard, both troublesome adjuncts*). Madam, it is not always best to tell people what is the matter with them. It makes them nervous. Now I can see that you are of a nervous disposition—

Patient. (*weeping*). I am, doctor! There never was a nervouser woman!

Crabs. One can see that at a glance, Madam. You must reserve your nerves as much as possible. Your disease is fatal in only eight cases out of ten.

Patient. (*rolling her eyes*). Oh my goodness, am I going to die?

Crabs. (*stroking his beard*). I hope not, Madam. Follow my directions, and come again. Avoid complications and draughts. What is the name, Madam?

Patient. (*rising to go*). Mrs. Michael O'Shannessy.

Crabs. Thank you. (*bowing her out*). Good morning, Madam. (*Patient goes, subdued and wide-eyed.*) Good morning. (*He writes, painfully, in a big ledger.*) Mrs. Michael O'Shannessy. One dollar. I wonder what's the matter with her? I must read up.

(*Enter a man Patient, with his head tied up.*)

Patient. (*falling limply into a chair*). Doc, I'm a sick man. I'm an awful sick man!

Crabs. (*sympathetically*). What's the matter of you?

Patient. It's my head! Oh Lord, my head! It feels like a football game.

Crabs. (*feeling his head*). It does? Let me see your tongue. (*Takes out his watch, and counts his pulse.*) Your pulse is irresponsible and variable. How is your appetite?

Patient. Bad, Doc, mighty bad. Everything tastes like cotton.

Crabs. (*thoughtfully*). Delirious trimmings, in my judgment. Let me see. (*He reads and reads in the book, frowning heavily.*) There are nineteen different sorts of headaches. We must wait developments. In many cases it is best to—to wait developments.

Patient. (*groaning*). Can't you give me something now? I'll die waiting developments.

Crabs. (*going to the medicine shelf*). Certainly. Certainly. I can give you tempermental relief. (*He straightens his beard, pours medicine, and wraps up the bottle, the Patient groaning mortally the while.*) Here you are. Take a teaspoonful of this every hour, and one of these pills every three hours. The baysillus in your brain is in very bad shape, but this is all we can do at present.

Patient. (*rising stiffly*). Now honest, Doc, what's the matter with me?

Crabs. (*soothingly*). My dear sir, it is impossible to say at this stage of the game. I shall have to study your constitution and by-laws.

Patient. (*pocketing the medicine*). Will you have to operate, do you think?

Crabs. As to that, I can not say. The baysillus is a very complicated organ, and I would—er—er advise against operating unless in extreme cases. But do not be distressed. I will let you know in time.

Patient. How much, Doc?

Crabs. (*genially*). One dollar, my dear sir. (*Patient pays*). Thank you. Good morning. (*Patient goes, much depressed. Crabs writes in the ledger.*) That's a straight whiskey headache, but I did n't dast say so. A doctor can't tell people all he knows. I've learned that much.

(*Enter Lord Wigglestaff and Lord Noddlehede.*)

Wig. Is this Dr. Know-All?

Crabs. (*snatching off his falling beard as he turns*). I am Dr. Know-All.

Wig. My name is Wigglestaff, Lord Wigglestaff.

Crabs. (*bowing*). Thank you, my lord.

Wig. My friend, Lord Noddlehede, of Noddlehede Hall.

Crabs. (*bowing, well-nigh overcome*). Good morning, my lord.

Wig. (*going*). Well, Noddlehede, I'll leave you here. Doc'll take care of you. See you later. So long!

Crabs. (*bowing and bowing*). Good morning, my lord. Do not hurry away, my lord. (*Wigglestaff goes, waving his hat airily.*) Be seated, my lord. What may I do for you, my lord? ..

Nod. (*extending his elegant hand*). Doctor Know-All, it gives me great pleasure to meet one of whom rumor speaks so favorably. (*seats himself*). I have heard much of your kindness to the poor, since you came among us, and it affords me extreme gratification that a man of your character has settled in our midst. (*Crabs swallows his pride and surprise in one lump.*) I have called to ask you and your wife to dine with me at my palace tomorrow, at one o'clock, that I may become better acquainted with one who is known far and wide for his—er—his erudition, if I may be allowed the expression in the presence of the gentleman himself. (*Crabs is too much overcome to reply*). That is, Doctor, if you can spare the time. I know that you are much occupied with your professional duties.

Crabs. (*now quite recovered*). My lord, you are very kind, but I am afraid that I can not find the time from my—er professional duties. Every day I am more rushed; only yesterday I had to turn away several important patients. And I have not had time to fix up my office; I trust your lordship will excuse it. Let me see; let me see. (*He opens the ledger, makes some notes in pencil, then takes down the 'phone receiver.*) 1109, please.....1109. Thank you.....Dr. Sawbones? Oh, he's not in.....This is Dr. Know-All.....Dr. Know-All.....Will you tell the Doctor that Dr. Know-All can not meet him tomorrow at eleven?.....At eleven.....That's all. I will call him up later. (*rings*

up another party, with professional preoccupation.) 160
.....160.....Mrs. Martin?.....Is this Mrs. Martin?
.....It is Mrs. Martin?.....Oh.....This is Dr. Know-All.
.....Thursday at 9 in the morning.....No, not tomorrow. I find I cannot see you tomorrow.....
That's all. (*hangs up the receiver, then studies the ledger again*).. My lord, I am happy to say that I can be with you tomorrow, after all.

Nod. (*rising, much impressed with all this*). The pleasure is mine, Dr. Know-All. I feel honored. I will send my carriage for you at twelve-thirty o'clock. Will that be agreeable to you?

Crabs. (*rising*). Yes, my lord. Quite so, my lord.

Nod. Present my compliments to your wife. It will afford me much pleasure to welcome her to Noddlehedde Hall. I need not detain you longer. Good morning.

Crabs. (*almost bowing himself to extinction*). Good morning, my lord. Thank you, my lord. (*Noddlehedde goes, and Crabs sinks into a chair, limp.*)

(*Enter Mrs. Crabs, tiptoe.*)

Mrs. C. I heard it all! There was a coach and two footmen! What an elegant voice he has? Is he married?

Crabs. (*swiping his brow with a red handkerchief*). I'm a made man! I'm a made man!

Mrs. C. (*wiping her brimming eyes on her sewing apron*). But how will we know how to act? We aint got no manners!

Crabs. We'll have manners enough. We *got* to have. If I miss this chance, shoot me for a fiddler! I'm a made man! (*Rises, and holds out his arms, the red handkerchief waving gallantly.*) Gretchel, old girl, our fortune's made!

Mrs. C. (*tumbling into his arms*). Oh Jacob!

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

(The Dining-room of Lord Noddlehead's Palace, the Next Day.)

(The Dining-room of Noddlehede Hall. A table spread for dinner, with three covers. Peters, in livery, stands in the background, by a serving table.)

(Enter Lord Noddlehede, escorting "Dr. Know-All," and his wife. Mrs. Crabs is got up "regardless," but, being subdued, she does not appear ridiculous.)

Nod. Welcome to Noddlehede Hall. *(He steps to the table, bows, and places a chair for Mrs. Crabs.)* Permit me, Madam. *(Mrs. Crabs seats herself.)* Doctor, will you be seated? *(Peters places a chair for Crabs, beside that of his wife, then seats Noddlehede at the head of the table.)* Permit me to express my pleasure in having such distinguished guests at my table. *(To Peters.)* Let the dinner be served.

Peters. Yes, my lord. *(He goes out, stick-like and solemn.)*

Crabs. *(leaning back, chesty and grand.)* The pleasure is all ours, my lord. You show us great honor.

Nod. *(opening his napkin, an action imitated by the Crabses, as all his subsequent "table manners" are).* I presume you do not have much time in your busy life for the frivolities of society, Doctor? *(Peters enters, with a large platter.)*

Crabs. No, my lord, a doctor's life is a hard one. *(aside to his wife).* That's the first one. *(Peters, knowing that this aside refers to him, is disconcerted.)*

Nod. *(carving with elegant precision).* So I have been informed. But the opportunities to do good are endless, if I may be allowed to express myself so forcibly.

(Enter the Second Servant, with a covered dish.)

Crabs. *(aside to his wife).* That's the second one. *(Under Mrs. Crabs' wide gaze, the Second Servant becomes flurried.)* Yes, my lord. That is true, my lord.

Nod. Which do you prefer, white or dark meat, Madam?

Mrs. C. Oh, it don't matter a bit, my lord. I eat every kind. (*The Second Servant carries a covered dish to the guests.*)

Nod. Permit me, Madam, to help you to some of the white meat. I trust you will find it to your liking.—Which will you have, Doctor?

Crabs. Dark meat, my lord. Thank you, my lord.

Nod. (*to Crabs*). As I was about to remark, I presume your time is occupied to the exclusion of the lighter pleasures of life, if I may permit myself the expression?

Mrs. C. (*bravely butting in*). He's hardly ever at home, my lord. I often say I might as well not have any husband for all I get of him.

Nod. I presume that is quite true, Madam. (*Peters proffers the bread plate to her.*)

Crabs. (*aside to his wife*). That's the first one, remember. (*The servants gaze at each other in startled dismay.*) Yes, I am a very busy man these days. There is so much sickness among the nobility, my lord. You would be astonished.

Nod. The bread, Peters.—You don't tell me, Doctor. Of course the burdens of society fall heavily on the upper classes. The ladies get scarcely any rest during the season. Lady Poppletop is prostrate today, my lord tells me. She was at the ball last night, the gayest of the gay, but it was too much for her. (*The Second Servant removes the plates to the side table.*)

Crabs. (*aside to his wife*). That's the second one again.—Lady Poppletop is not strong, my lord. I am sorry to say that her specific gravity is intermittent—very intermittent. (*The servants hold a scared whispered conference at the side table.*)

Nod. You surprise me, Doctor. Does my Lord Poppletop know of this condition?

Crabs. (*shaking his head*). I informed his lordship of her condition only last week, my lord.

Nod. These beautiful women, how delicate they are! This is distressing. Society would suffer a great loss in Lady Poppletop's demise.—Peters, serve the coffee. (*Peters goes out.*)

(*Enter the Third Servant, with a large covered tureen, which he places before his master.*)

Crabs. (*looking hard at the Third Servant, and speaking aside to his wife*). That's the third one, my dear. (*The Third Servant looks frightened, and stumbles about. Peters comes in with the coffee.*)

Nod. (*smiling*). Ah, what have we here? Doctor, I am informed by Lord Wigglestaff that you are a mind reader, and know things without being told. (*The scared servants nudge each other.*) I will make a test of your power. Can you, without looking, tell me what is in this tureen? (*Mrs. Crabs looks anxious. The listening servants are on tenter-hooks.*)

Crabs. (*apostrophizing himself*). Oh Crabs, Crabs, Crabs, this is a hard place for you!

Nod. Now let us see if you are right. (*He takes off the cover of the tureen.*) They are crabs! I perceive that you are a very clever man. (*He serves the crabs, smilingly.*) Now I should like to ask you a question. Will you permit me? (*The servants confer in the background.*)

Crabs. I am at your service, my lord.

Nod. (*leaning back*). The question I am about to ask has to do with a robbery that occurred in my palace the day before yesterday. I presume you have heard of it? (*Peters goes out, hastily.*)

Crabs. No, my lord, I do not get time to read the papers much. You say there was a robbery *here*, in *your* palace, my lord?

Nod. There was. Ten thousand dollars was taken from my strong box.

Crabs. (*gasping*). My lord!

Mrs. C. (*rolling her eyes*). For the land sakes!

Nod. Well may you exclaim, Madam. Such a daring

robbery has not been known in these parts for a hundred years.

Mrs. C. For the land sakes!

(*Enter Peters.*)

Peters. Pardon me, my lord. A gentleman to see you on important business.

Nod. (*rising*). It is probably the Chief of Police. Excuse me. Pray proceed with your dinner. (*He goes.*)

Peters. (*to Crabs*). Oh sir, we know that we are discovered in our wickedness. (*falls on his knees*). We beg for mercy.

Sec. Ser. (*falling on his knees beside Peters*). We beg for mercy!

Third Ser. (*falling on his knees beside the Second Servant*). We beg for mercy!

Mrs. C. What's the matter with them? How silly they look!

Crabs. (*puzzled, but "game"*). Be quiet, my dear. (*To Peters, sternly*). I have you in my power.

Peters. You have.

Sec. Ser. You have.

Third Ser. (*sniffing*). You have, good Sir!

Crabs. (*severely*). Well, what do you propose to do about it? Speak up!

Peters. I will give you one hundred dollars if you will not tell Lord Noddlehede.

Sec. Ser. I will give you fifty.

Third Ser. (*sniffing*). I will give you twenty-five if you won't tell on me. (*He breaks down.*)

Mrs. C. What's the matter of them, Jacob? Make them go away.

Crabs. (*sizing them up thoughtfully*). Stand up! (*They rise, fearfully, and he turns to the Third Servant.*) Quit blubbering, you baby! (*He looks sternly at each, in turn.*) You stole your master's gold.

Peters. (*wringing his hands*). We did.

Sec. Ser. We did.

Third Ser. (*mopping his eyes with his serving napkin*). We did! Oh, we did!

Crabs. You stole it, and then you hid it. You know where it is this minute.

Peters. We do.

Sec. Ser. We do. (*Third Servant weeps copiously.*)

Crabs. (*sizing them up scornfully*). You're a pretty brace of servants now, aint you? Sneak thieves. Hangin's too good for you. If I say the word, his lordship will put you all in jail. He ought to.

Peters. (*falling on his knees*). Oh, kind Sir, be merciful!

Sec. Ser. (*falling on his knees*). Be merciful! I have ten children to support!

Third Ser. (*falling on his quaking knees*). Be merciful to me, a sinner! (*He weeps.*)

Crabs. Get up! (*They rise, creakingly.*) Where's the money? Tell me that, and I'll see that you don't go to jail.

Peters. (*looking around fearfully*). It is under the barn floor, in two money bags.

Crabs. That's the truth, is it?

Peters. (*holding up his hand*). It is. So help me.

Sec. Ser. (*holding up his hand*). He has spoke the truth. So help me.

Third Ser. (*holding up his hand*). It is. I dug the hole myself. So help me.

Crabs. All right. (*to Peters*). Go get me that one hundred dollars, (*to Second Servant*), and that fifty, (*to Third Servant*), and that twenty-five. Hurry up!

All. Yes, Sir! (*They start to go, bumping into each other in their eagerness.*)

Crabs. Don't make so much noise. (*They go, pell-mell. He seats himself at the table, chuckling.*)

Mrs. C. Is n't that dreadful? How did you know they stole the money?

Crabs. (*helping himself to fresh food*). Did n't know it. I was counting the servants, to see how many a lord keeps, and they thought I had 'em spotted. My dear, we are famous from this hour. Hereafter, Doctor Know-All rides in his own carriage.

(*Enter Lord Noddlehede.*)

Nod. I was absent longer than I expected. I trust you will pardon my neglect. No trace of the robbers has been found.

Crabs. (*eating his dinner serenely*). My lord, may I offer you some advice?

Nod. (*pacing the floor*). My dear sir, be frank. The Chief of Police is ready to abandon the search, and I am at my wits' end. I desire you to be frank.

Crabs. My lord, your money is under the barn floor, in two money bags.

Nod. (*ringing the bell violently*). We will search the spot immediately. I will have the floor taken up.

This is wonderful! (*Rings the bell more.*) You are the most clever man in the world! Peters! So it was buried on my own property, right under my servants' eyes! Peters! (*rings and rings*). Where is that fellow? Peters! Oh Peters!

Crabs. He was here a minute ago, my lord.

(*Enter Peters, about winded.*)

Peters. Did you ring, my lord?

Nod. Peters, my gold is found!

Peters. My lord, you astonish me! (*Under pretext of refilling Crabs' tumbler, he smuggles a roll of bills to him*). Where, my lord?

Nod. Under the barn floor, in three money bags.

Crabs. (*drinking water*). Two money bags. Pardon me, my lord.

Nod. Yes, I mean two; two money bags. Go tell the carpenter to take up the barn floor. I will join you shortly. (*Peters goes.*) Doctor, I will give you one thousand dollars if the money is found there.

(Enter the Second Servant, breathless.)

Nod. *(to Second Servant)*. Go help Peters take up the barn floor.

Sec. Ser. *(gasping)*. The barn floor?

Nod. Go help him. Don't stand there with your mouth open! My gold is found.

Crabs. *(with a meaning look at the Second Servant)*. Please give me a glass of water. *(While pouring the water, the Second Servant smuggles Crabs some gold pieces.)* Thank you. *(The Second Servant goes out.)*

Nod. Doctor, will you accompany me to the barn? I will sign a check for one thousand dollars the instant we find the money.

Crabs. *(drinking water)*. Yes, my lord. Thank you, my lord.

Mrs. C. *(rising)*. Oh, let me go, too!

Nod. *(graciously)*. Certainly, Madam. The situation is not without its romantic side. Permit me. *(He offers her his arm.)* Let us go immediately.

(Enter the Third Servant, in haste.)

Crabs. I'll come in a minute. I seem uncommon dry. *(meaningly, to the trembling Third Servant)*. A glass of water, please.

Nod. We will proceed slowly. This way, Madam. Mind the step. *(They go.)*

Third Ser. *(pouring water)*. Yes, Sir. *(Crabs takes the bills he hands him, and points silently to the door. The Third Servant goes, trembling. Crabs counts all his money, aloud and unctiously, and stows it away, grinning.)* From this day, Doctor Know-All rides in his own carriage. *(He grins, drinks more water, and struts out.)*

CURTAIN.

ACT V.

(The Office of Doctor Know-All, Six Months Later.)

(Doctor Know-All's private office, an elegantly appointed apartment. Enter Dr. Know-All, sprucely dressed, as from the street, with a medicine case. He rings a bell; a trim waiting maid enters, to whom he hands his hat and coat.)

Maid. Lord Wiggstaff is waiting to see you.

Crabs. Send him in. *(The Maid goes.)*

(Enter Lord Wiggstaff, "dressed" and jovial.)

Wig. *(slapping him lightly on the shoulder).* Hello, Doc!

Crabs. *(extending his hand).* Good afternoon, my lord. Be seated.

Wig. *(sitting down on the edge of the desk).* Can't stop, old man. Want you to go duck hunting. How about it?

Crabs. *(seating himself).* I don't know. I might manage it. When do you propose going?

Wig. Want to go Monday, for three days. We'll put up at my lodge. Lord Stein and Harry Hardryder are going. We voted to have you. Better say yes, and save further trouble.

Crabs. I'm afraid I have n't got time, my lord.

Wig. *(winking).* Oh yes, you have, Doc! I call your bluff!

Crabs. You're very kind, but really I am so busy—

Wig. *(leaning forward to tap him on the shoulder with his cane).* Of course you're busy, my boy. You're so bloomin' busy that you make most folks look like snails on a dry day, but—*(grinning)* you're coming with us, just the same, you know.

Crabs. *(grinning).* Monday, did you say?

Wig. *(slipping off the desk).* Monday's the time,

the Grand Hotel's the place, and mum's the word. We start at 10. Hardryder will join us on the North Fork Road. So long, Monday at 10.

Crabs. Good afternoon, my lord. (*Wigglestaff goes. Crabs opens the big book on the desk, and rings the bell.*)

(*Enter the Maid.*)

Crabs. Show the first patient in. (*The Maid goes.*)

(*Enter an ultra-modish Lady, followed by a Nurse, who leads an over-dressed, sulky little girl.*)

Crabs. Good afternoon, Madam.

Lady. How do you do, Doctor? (*She extends her hand, held high.*) My name is De Haven—Mrs. S. Harrington De Haven.

Crabs. Be seated, Madam.

Lady. (*seating herself*). I am so glad to find you in. So glad. They say that you are the busiest man (*laughs lightly*), just the busiest man!

Crabs. (*seating himself*). I find my time very much occupied, Mrs. De Haven.

Lady. Oh, I know. I know. I often say to Mr. De Haven, "Oh, these doctors! How do they *ever* find time to eat!"—Come here, Madeline Genevra. (*The little girl shakes her head until her hat rattles.*) Come here, my child.

Nurse. Go to Mamma, Sweetheart. Go to Mamma. That's Mary's little girl.

Child. (*jerking away*). I won't.

Lady. Dear child, she is so sensitive, so timid. It's because everything is strange to her.—Madeline Genevra, come here.

Child. I won't. (*The Nurse pets her anxiously.*)

Crabs. Is the little girl ill, Madam?

Lady. Come here, Pet, to me.—Yes, doctor, she is so nervous that I have decided to put her under the care of a specialist.—Madeline Genevra, why do you not obey me? Madeline Genevra, do you hear me?

Nurse. Answer your Mamma, Sweetheart.

Child. (*scowling at Crabs*). I hate that nasty doctor.

Lady. (*with a rippling laugh*). The dear child! How quick they understand things!—The doctor will not hurt you, my Precious. He is going to make you well. Come here, and let him look at your tongue. (*The Nurse gently pushes the Child forward, whereupon the latter emits a loud yell of defiance.*) Why, Madeline Geneva! What has come over you? Come to me this instant!

Crabs. (*rising*). Let me speak to her, Madam. (*to the Child*). Would you like to see the pretty pussy cat I have?

Child. (*violently*). No.

Crabs. Don't you like pussy cats?

Child. No. (*with a wail*). I want to go home! I want to go home!

Lady. The precious child is frightened. I am afraid you do not understand children, doctor.—He only wants to see your tongue, Sweetheart. I will not let him hurt you. See, Mary is not afraid of him.—Are you, Mary?

Mary. No indeed. He is a nice doctor. (*The Child eyes the trio with sour disdain.*)

Lady. I will give you a new necklace tomorrow, if you will let the doctor see your tongue.

Nurse. Miss Madeline wants red slippers, Mrs. De Haven. She told me so yesterday.

Child. (*with a wild-cat turn*). I never! That's a story!

Lady. Madeline—Madeline Geneva! I will not permit you to speak in that manner to Mary. Now kiss her, and tell her you are sorry. Did you hear me, Madeline? Sweetheart, kiss poor Mary. Poor Mary, she loves you so! (*Mary pretends to cry.*) You have broken poor Mary's heart. And she is so good to you. You are a naughty girl. (*She pretends to cry.*)

Mary. (*peeking forth cautiously*). There, Miss

Madeline! You have made your pretty Mamma cry!
Poor Mamma!

Child. She aint cryin'.

Lady. (*peeking forth, as Mary retires behind her handkerchief again*). Do you think you are acting like Mamma's little lady, Madeline?.....Poor Mary. Do not cry, Mary. Madeline is sorry.

Child. I aint.

Crabs. Do you wish to have the child examined, Madam.

Lady. Yes, but the little darling is so timid. I do not know what to do. It makes her nervous to cross her.

Crabs. (*approaching the child*). We must use firmness...Now, Madeline—

Child. (*striking him pettishly*). Go 'way, you nasty doctor! Go 'way. (*She runs out, howling.*)

Lady. Mary, get her quick! She will be killed in the street! (*Mary rushes out.*) There never was such a sensitive child. I am afraid she takes it after me. Is it not terrible the way she suffers? I will bring her again tomorrow. You must be very gentle with her. I think you startled her today; her nerves are in a wretched condition. (*Crabs bows, speechless. Without there are sounds of a scuffle, and screams of "I won't! I won't!"*) The precious darling! Excuse me! (*She hurries out.*)

Crabs. (*solemnly*). One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. The devil! (*He waits till the outer commotion has died away, then rings the bell.*)

(*Enter the Maid, smiling roguishly.*)

Show the next patient in.

Maid. Yes, doctor. (*She goes, still smiling.*)

(*Enter a woman Patient, fashionably dressed, with picture hat, and a corsage bouquet.*)

Patient. (*in a plaintive voice*). Good afternoon, doctor.

Crabs. (*bowing with deference*). Mrs. Montmorcency. Pray be seated. How are you feeling?

Patient. (*sinking gracefully into a chair*). Not so well, thank you, doctor. My nerves are in a dreadful condition—perfectly dreadful.

Crabs. How do you know it's your nerves?

Patient. (*plaintively*). Because I'm so nervous. Don't you think people know when they're nervous? And I worry—oh dear, you men don't know what worry is! Sometimes I think I shall go mad thinking about things!

Crabs. (*soothingly*). Then stop thinking, Madam.

Patient. (*with arch reproach*). Oh doctor, how can I? You know one can not stop thinking. (*holds a laced handkerchief to her eyes*). Oh, my poor nerves! I want to cry all the time.

Crabs. This is very distressing. (*There is a pause.*) Then you're no better, you think?

Patient. (*dabbing her eyes daintily*). No, I am worse. I am very much worse. Everybody says so. Why, only this morning I spoke sharply to my dear little Alphonso. Think of that. I know I hurt his little feelings. But it just shows what a sad state my nerves are in. (*weeps*).

Crabs. (*kindly sympathetic*). He's a handsome boy, Mrs. Montmorency. I often see him with his nurse.

Patient. (*looking out of her handkerchief in surprise*). No, no, my dog—my poor little Alphonso. You should have seen him look up at me! Don't you see how bad my nerves are when I can be cross to him—the poor little innocent! (*Weeps daintily.*)

Crabs. (*gravely*). Ah, I see. Undoubtedly there is a fundamental derangement of your nervous system. The trouble is more serious than I—er apprehended. I am of the opinion that you need a decided change of climate.

Patient. (*earnestly*). I was afraid you would say that, doctor. What do you advise?

Crabs. I would recommend a sea voyage.

Patient. (*smiling a little*). Where would you advise

me to go, doctor? I will go anywhere you say. I feel that it is my duty.

Crabs. America, by all means. Three months in Washington, then down the coast to Florida.

Patient. (*earnestly*). Would you advise Palm Beach?

Crabs. By all means. Palm Beach, by all means.

Patient. (*sighing, then dimpling, and sighing again*). Well, if I must, I suppose I must. (*rises gracefully*). I told Mr. Montmorency that I was afraid you would insist on my going to America. How soon must I go?

Crabs. (*rising*). As soon as possible. Complications may set in unless you get started at once.

Patient. (*radiantly*). I will go next week. (*extends her hand*). And I promise not to worry about home one bit—not one bit! Good bye, doctor. Thank you. Good bye.

Crabs. Good bye, Mrs. Montmorency. I trust you will have a pleasant voyage.

Patient. (*radiantly*). Thank you, doctor. So kind of you! Good bye! Good bye! (*She goes.*)

Crabs. (*dryly*). Good bye. (*He writes in the ledger.*) Mrs. Fitzgerald De Montmorency. Five Dollars. There's only one prescription for rich nervous women. I always give 'em that. (*He takes down the 'phone receiver.*) 168.....168.....Is this Dr. Sordium?.....Oh. Well, tell him that Dr. Know-All will meet him tomorrow morning at 10.....Tomorrow at 10.....Yes. He'll understand. (*He hangs up the receiver, and rings the bell.*)

(*Enter the Maid.*)

Crabs. (*curtly*). Next patient. (*Maid goes.*)

(*Enter a man Patient; an elderly man, leaning on a crutch, with one of his feet in a bundle.*)

Good afternoon, my lord. And how is the gout today?

Patient. (*seating himself with many groans and grunts*). Do you know what I think?

Crabs. (*genially*). No, my lord. What do you think?

Patient. (*pounding on the floor with his crutch*). I think you doctors don't know any more about gout than I do about astronomy. I've been doctoring for three years, and look at that foot! Look at that foot! !

Crabs. But, my lord, you eat what you please, and when you please, and—

Patient. (*making wry faces from the pain*). Of course I do. I will eat what I please, and drink what I please, as long as I please. Do I pay you to dictate to me what I shall eat and drink? I pay you for medicine. Give me some more of those brown pills.

Crabs. (*going to the medicine chest*). Yes, my lord. Certainly, my lord.

Patient. (*groaning as he talks*). I say that doctors ought to know their place. When a man tells me what to eat, that man's going too far. (*stops to groan*). I say that man's going too far. All I want of you is to be cured. That's what doctors are for; to cure people. You talk too much, doctor. You have too many opinions. Do you suppose I would be here if I was n't sick? Do you, now? Answer up like an honest man.

Crabs. (*wrapping up the pill box*). Certainly not, my lord.

Patient. (*scowling frightfully*). Well, I should say I would n't. What would a well man do hanging 'round a doctor shop? I'd steer clear of 'em if I could. I tell you that.

Crabs. I don't doubt it, my lord. Has your head cleared up?

Patient. My head's as clear as a bell. I never had any trouble with my head until your confounded medicine made me dizzy. (*winces from pain*). I was a sound man until I commenced foolin' with doctors.

Crabs. We'll make you a sound man again, my lord. Do you sleep well?

Patient. What's the use of asking me that? If I did n't would n't I tell you? My head's clear, and I

sleep all right. Is there anything else? Oh yes, my nerves. Of course. My nerves. (*grinding his teeth*). Why don't you ask me about my nerves? (*Crabs smiles at him, and shrugs.*) Thank you. For once we'll omit the discussion on nerves. I'm a man of iron nerves, or I'd kick the bottom out of things. (*nurses his bundled foot*).

Crabs. How's your stomach?

Patient. (*mopping his anguished brow*). There it goes again! How is my stummick? I tell you the pain's in my foot. You take care of my foot; I can attend to my stummick. That's what I say (*stops to groan and cough*); you doctors talk too much. You ask too many questions. If there's anything the matter with my stummick (*stops to cough a bit*), you ought to know it. If you don't know what's the matter, why don't you? My Heavens, this is worse than toothache? (*He bends over his bundled foot, and his crutch falls to the floor.*)

Crabs. (*picking up the crutch*). My lord, listen. If you will eat—

Patient. (*rising painfully*). But I won't. Do you hear? I won't. Give me my pills. When I pay a man to tell me what to eat I'll be a sicker man than I am now. (*He stumps out, angrily, albeit in pain.*)

Crabs. Tiresome old party. (*looks at his watch*). Ten minutes past four. (*rings the bell*).

(*Enter the Maid.*)

Crabs. (*yawning*). Are there any more patients out there?

Maid. Nine.

Crabs. (*yawning*). Men or women?

Maid. All women.

Crabs. It's after four. I won't see any more patients today. Tell 'em to come tomorrow. Get my coat. (*The Maid goes out. Crabs whistles softly, waiting.*)

(*Enter the Maid, with his hat and coat.*)

Crabs. (*putting on his coat*). Call my carriage.

Maid. Yes, doctor. (*She goes. Crabs stocks his medicine case.*)

(*Enter the Maid.*)

Maid. Your carriage, doctor.

Crabs. (*taking up his hat and medicine case*). All right. (*He goes. The Maid tidies up the room, and the 'phone rings.*)

Maid. (*at the 'phone*).....Yes.....Yes. This is Doctor Know-All's office.....I can't tell you. He has a good many calls to make.....No, not this evening. He'll be out of town?.....Lord Dangleford?.....Yes, my lord.....Yes, three o'clock.....Yes, my lord.....Yes indeed. (*She hangs up the receiver, makes memoranda, yawns a big, delicious yawn, and goes out.*)

CURTAIN.

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